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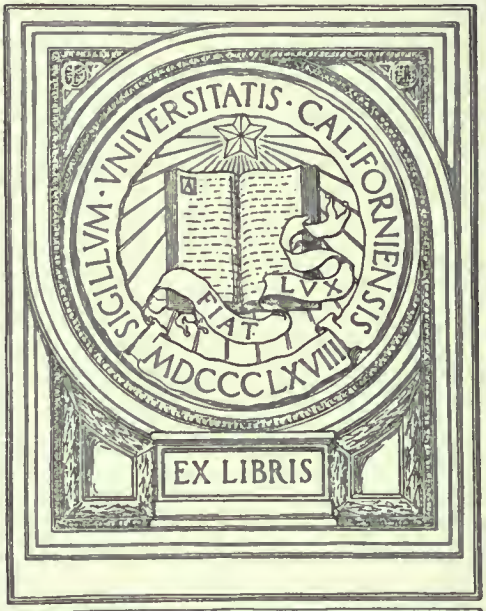
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W. M. Thackeray

AND

Edward FitzGerald

A LITERARY FRIENDSHIP

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS AND VERSES

BY

W. M. Thackeray

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

Lady Ritchie

(18)

Thackeray, William Makepeace

W. M. Thackeray
AND
Edward FitzGerald

A LITERARY FRIENDSHIP

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A FOREWORD

A TRULY valuable book has just been placed in my hands, although but for a moment. It is merely a scrapbook, but this scrapbook is one of the most attractive that I have ever seen, for it is closely associated with two great names in our literature—Edward FitzGerald, to whom we owe the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* with which we are all familiar, and William Makepeace Thackeray, whose novels we love so much, but of whose attractive personality we are not too well acquainted. How great the friendship between Thackeray and FitzGerald the world has heard from Lady Ritchie's reminiscences of her father, but this book adds largely to our knowledge. Thackeray, we know, embellished his letters with sketches, for he was an artist before he became a novelist and, it will be recalled, narrowly escaped becoming the illustrator of one of Charles Dickens's stories. FitzGerald was one of his most intimate friends and constant letters passed between them, and Thackeray invariably sent sketches to illustrate his experiences. It was FitzGerald's custom to paste up these sketches in a book. The scrapbook is a folio volume, and in it FitzGerald has pasted 150 separate items, sent to him by the author of *Vanity Fair*. In doing so he was very ruthless about the letters, and he never hesitated, where a sketch was on one side of the page and much writing on the other, to sacrifice the writing, thus destroying many precious letters, although it is possible that some future fortunate owner of this priceless volume will carefully remove all the pages from the book and thus endeavour to decipher what may be found on the other side of each page.

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A FOREWORD

In the meantime I have been privileged to take some extracts—stray verses and stray fragments of letters. In 1864 FitzGerald sent this scrapbook to his friend's daughter, with the following inscription in his own handwriting:—

> "This volume of W. M. Thackeray's Drawings, Fragments of Letters, &c., from the year 1829 till 1850, bequeathed to Annie Thackeray, his Daughter, by his Friend Edward FitzGerald.
>
> Woodbridge, *December* 25, 1864."

The interest of the scrapbook is enhanced by a lengthy descriptive introduction in the handwriting of Thackeray's daughter, Lady Ritchie, and I have reproduced herein some of the illustrations by her father, to which she refers.

CLEMENT SHORTER.

April, 1916.

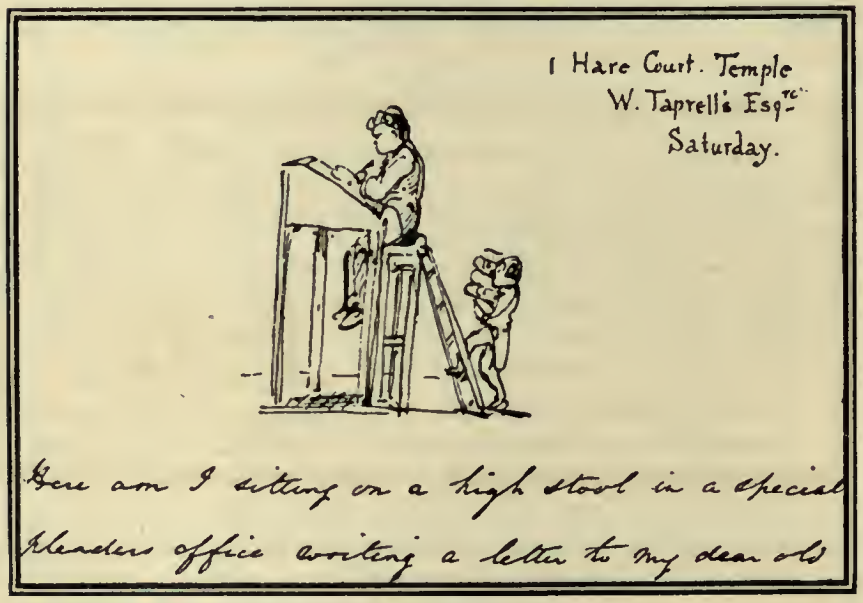
INTRODUCTION

MR. FITZGERALD put this scrapbook together in 1864, a year after my father's death. He gave it to me soon afterwards, and I have had it ever since in my own home or at Messrs. Smith & Elder's in Waterloo Place.

It will be seen that the sketches are chiefly taken out of letters from my father to his friend, who has described and annotated the various drawings and items. Mr. FitzGerald was scrupulous, far beyond the present standard, as to the reticence due to ourselves and to others. He cut away and destroyed page after page, but he left enough to show what a happy, merry friendship was that of the two young men to begin with, and, when trial and great sorrow came for my father, "old Fitz's" generous-hearted sympathy never failed. The little drawings of Sir Roger de Coverley from the *Spectator* belong to that time, when they were ordered and paid for by this friend to give my father help and some distraction from present troubles.

If I attempt to act as show-woman it is only to record one or two traditions of which I have no records to quote from, only impressions to remember. I have always heard that it was Wordsworth who was relating his Paris adventures to Mrs. Barbauld in the drawing labelled "Telemachus recounting his adventures to Calypso." "Henry," who is mentioned as a companion on more than one occasion, was Henry Kemble, Charles Kemble's son. I have heard my father speak of him as almost the handsomest man he had ever seen in his life. They must have visited music halls together, *vide* the delightful, doleful trio, and the records of plays such as that scene

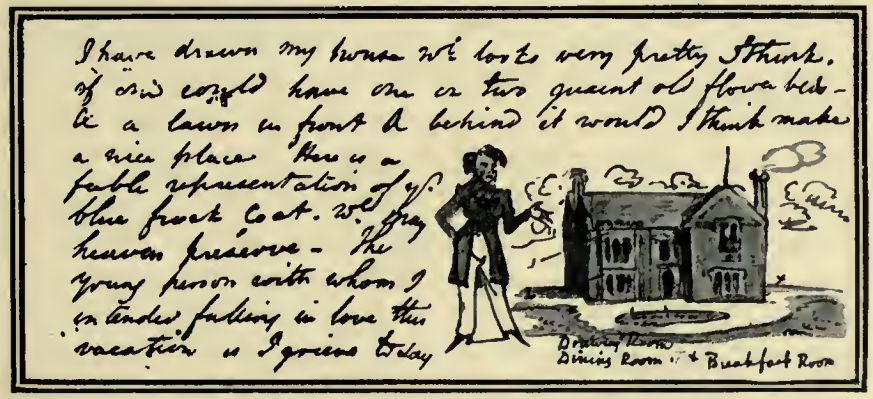
between the Queen and Hamlet which has been reproduced, and the glorious cavalry charges, commanded by Mr. Ducrow in person; and then other sketches form a sober reality which came to nothing more, whereas the droll fancies and imaginings live



still on and on. For instance, there is a design dated from Mr. Taprell's office, 1, Hare Court, Temple, Saturday, 1831. "Here am I," he says, "on a high stool in a special pleader's office," and this drawing is about all the result of those legal

INTRODUCTION

studies from which so much was expected. One page is a FitzGerald page. It shows E.F.G. in a celebrated blue coat which was much admired by his friends at the time; then in a Weimar Court suit; then, in after life, surrounded by a large and aggressive family. Another page describes an imaginary journey to be taken the following year by the friends. "Fancy going to Spain, blackeyed donñas (observe the ~), mules,



robbers, segars . . ." The grand climax is a design thus described: "The mules quietly gazing down the precipice, the faithless postillion, the miserable Pedro, is lying in his top boots with his face cut in two by Captain FitzGerald, who is seen in the act of stamping out the wind of one of the banditti, while he is running another thro' the chin. Hon the right half hoff the picture Mr. Thackeray is to be hobserved after the

manner of a true Henglishman. He has fastened his fistes hon the vizzens on two hof the robbers," &c., &c. The end of the volume contains the story of Flore et Zephyr. It is perhaps, from a commercial point of view, a pity that Mr. FitzGerald cut off the margins of the drawings to fit the scrap-book more conveniently. . . . The portrait of my father in the beginning is a copy from Maclise and probably belongs to the series in the strangers' room at the Garrick Club.

ANNE RITCHIE.

Chelsea, 1913.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

To EDWARD FITZGERALD, Esq.

Dear Edward,—Your letter of this morning is a little too sensible but very welcome nevertheless, as every line must be wl·come from you. I am glad to hear of your happiness at Kenrick & feel not a little vain at Tennyson's message or wish. Write to me a good deal about Stratford on Avon when you go, you recollect that we had determined to make a Journey there together. I herewith send a very bad copy of a bad copy made by me of the Bonnington wh· I have managed to rob of all its grace & fantasticalness, & of its extraordinary delicacy of colour—the original is I think the finest water-colour drawing I ever saw in the world. Apropos of the Shop—I have had a whole packet of very pleasant letters from the boys in London—one from Mc Clive very mad & Irish, but very affectionate—one from Cattermole full of Walter Scottisms, wh· are his natural manner of talk, with a long list of remembrances from Lewis & the rest of the boys. I was very much delighted with these honest kind-hearted letters, that enlightened my darkness here and made the scoldings of that day pass unheeded altogether.

Do you know that I have been applying to the "Morning Chronicle" for a correspondentship at Constantinople, & it is not improbable that I shall get this wch. give me a handsome income for a year and fill my sketch book into the bargain, perhaps I might make a bargain with Chas. Heath for a Picturesque Animal. I should be only obliged to write 3 letters a month, & should be sent into Egypt & Syria to fish for news, it would be a grand piece of good luck I think, only it is too good luck for me. I have recovered from my idle fit and am making some drawings wh. I like better than any I have done as yet—thanks to burnt Sienna and the TOWEL wh., my dear Edward, is next to God the greatest help to a painter in water colours. I have seen those rough Lodges of Raphaele & still do not believe, I am sure Flaxman is much finer for drawing feeling compo and so on. I think I told you about a picture I had seen of the Virgin by St. Luke. I am quite sure it is like her, it is remarkable for a very curious development of the organ of veneration, & is a simple head like that of Xt. on the cloth.

Not having wherewithal to fill this large sheet of paper I have drawn you a view of a little street close

by, wh. strikes me as very quiet & characteristic of this dear old country of France. What is more there are actual nuns in this village, wh though within the barrier is altogether countryfied. I have drawn you one of them—has she not a Hollar-like look? Likewise on the right of the picter you behold an old dwarf who sits at our door in the Sun, of wh. thank God there is plenty, & to whom I intend someday to give a halfpenny. I read the other day a review of Tennyson's poems in the Voleur. I was glad to see that his name had penetrated so far, & he will be pleased to know that they call him Jeune enthousiaste de l'ecole gracieuse de Thomas Moore. This week I have read a lot of books. 3 vols. of Thier's Revolution, McFarlane's Constantinople, and Wash. Irving's new book—all 3 are very amusing I think & Thier's awful.—What surprizes me in this book is that there is no blague, no humbug about patrie reconnoissance & the rest of it, of wh. he is so liberal in the Chamber. Louis Seize, Danton, Mirabeau, and Dumouriez are the heroes up to this time & most admirably drawn they are. I think I should have turned spouter at the Union had I seen this book in our Cambridge days.

Next week begins the King's Fete & fun of all kinds, 3 days afterwards the prisoners of Lyons are to be tried, & not long after I hope to be on my way by Venice to Constantino:—

I am obliged to put up my packet, and so God bless you dear Edward,—

Yours ever affectionately, W. M. T.

To EDWARD FITZGERALD, Esq.

Lettsom is here like a good fellow. We went the other night to the Butler's Club he has discovered. There was only one butler but he was very rich. I wish you could have heard him describe his residence with a family in Paris in the year when Munseer Dulong was shot by Marshal Bogo. Bewgawd says I, I thinks the way of pronouncing the name. "I *think* you'll find it Bogo" says he with a solemnity wh. I can't describe. But it gratifies me to find that I described the place very accurately before having seen it. Good Heavens how I'm astonished at the length of this. It is like one of Morton's letters for size. I

am going to Brighton for 3 days holiday. God bless you, my dear old friend. It does me good to shake you by the hand sometimes and think of hundreds & hundreds of years ago.

W. M. T.

To EDWARD FITZGERALD, Esq.

I have been thinking of a walking trip for us two next year—about this time say. We will go like the German Students in France or Germany wh. shall it be? I am really afraid of going to Italy on account of the fleas. Really last year the whole pleasure of the Rhine was spoilt to me by those infernal animals. When we go to Italy together, we will I vote each take our own bed—how delightful an old caleche with one horse or two & a country servant! We need not travel faster than we like. It is written, & then from Italy we will pass back through France into Spain. Fancy going to Spain the country of the THEED! Blackeyed donñas (mark the ~), mules, robbers, segars. We will have an antique vehicle with a pocket in front to hold our books 2 portmanteaux apiece (one for the bed which is indispensable), 3 brace of pistols each &

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Blackissed ennas (mark the ~) mules, robbers & gars. We will have an antique vehicle with a pocket in front to hold our books 2 portmanteaux apiece (one for the bed which is indispensable — I brace of pistols each & a trusty Toledo to repel the attacks of the brigands likewise a Pair of seven-leaved boots to run away if necessary Fancy a "combat of eight" in some desolate Sierra

The carriage (of a peculiar construction) is in the back ground — the mules are quickly gazing down the precipice the faithless postillion (the miserable Pedro) has paid the price of his treachery he is lying in the top boots with his face cut in two by Captain Fitz Gerald — who is seen in the act of stamping out the wind of one of the banditti while he is running another through the chin — On the right hoff the picture Mr Thackeray is to be observed after the manner of a true Hengleishman) he has fastened his fiston on the vizzens of two of the robbers & has a squeedgeing out hof their miserable souls — to the foreground in the left is a rude cross! Christians pray for the wretch who fell at that shot without having the good fortune like Messrs F.G & T to save his life or most likely the bravery to defend it — By the bye I forgot this is a holiday for loyal hearts like a fellow came home for a subscription to feast the poor on occasion of his majesty's coronation the slave hath however departed by with out his guerdon I told him that to comfort indigent honesty or to relieve unmerited distress my purse was always open & also my heart more ready than my purse but to encourage indiscriminate profusion or to foster unnecessary hordigality agreed as little with my principle as it did with my means — & that therefore I never would sanction with my support a measure wh. has proving shewed me was impossible & my reason convinced me was impolitic — The man retired struck by opinion wh. his good nature led him to deplore but wh. his arguments could not controvert — (Repeated Cheering)

a trusty Toledo to repel the attacks of the brigands, likewise a pair of seven-leagued boots to run away if necessary. Fancy a "combat of eight" in some desolate Sierra.

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indigent honesty or to relieve unmerited distress my purse was always open, & alas my heart more ready than my purse, but to encourage indiscriminate profusion or to foster unnecessary prodigality agreed as little with my principles as it did with my means & that therefore I never would sanction with my support a measure wh. my poverty shewed me was impossible & my reason convinced me was impolitic. The man retired struck by opinions wh. his good nature led him to deplore but wh. his arguments could not controvert—(Repeated cheering.)

W. M. T.

To EDWARD FITZGERALD, Esq.

There I have written such a letter, as you never yet wrote, take example by it, & send me such another. But I must to my work so God bless you dear FitzGerald, ever your affectionate friend—

W. M. THACKERAY.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

To EDWARD FITZGERALD, Esq.

My dear old Edward.—Oh stop, I must send you a charade by a young lady. I am sure I ought to get the pocket book for it.

CHARADE BY A LADY OF FIFTEEN.

I am first in the last, in the lost I am found
In the flower you'll find me though not in the ground.
Not seen in the rose in the lily I'm hid
Not seen in the eye, yet (strange) in its lid.
In the palace I lurch, in the castle am seen
Yet banished (alas!) from the cot on the green.
Deep hid in the violets bosom I dip
I'm the very first thing to be found on your lip.
Though not known to the river I'm found in its flow
Unseen in the breezes I'm still in their blow.
Not felt in the fire I'm part of the coal
And am aye the last thing that is found in the bowl.
When you look to your right though of me you're bereft
I'm the very first thing that you meet on your left,
I always am heard in the toll of the bell
And am lying like truth at the end of a well.
Though absent when dinner & breakfast you munch
You'll certainly own that I'm present at lunch,
Yes, yes, I am never away from your meals
You have me alike in soles, salmon and eels.

In mutton, beef, chickens although I am missed
Yet in lamb & in fowl & in veal I exist.
Is a lady without me don't deign to accost her
You'll find her a bold begging letter impostor.
I'm twice in your pillow though not in your bed
Say gentles my name, for my riddle is read.

Amelia Jane.

I want this to be tried upon a young person of average intellect.

W. M. T.

Song as sung by Madame Vestris with tremendous applause!

'Tis pleasant to glide at even-tide
The moon-lit waves along
And pause to hear the Gondolier
Chant forth his evening song—
Hark oh hark!
Oer the waters dark
Heavily tolls the bell of St. Mark!
Listen oh listen
From church & tower
The bells they chime the midnight hour!

Our Gondoliers have no idears
Of singing such sweet ditties
They spit & stare & slang & swear
In this most vast of cities.
Hark oh hark
From wharfs & walls
Heavily chimeth the bell of St. Pauls!
Listen oh listen
The Waterman's song
Dieth away in that deep ding dong!

Bravo. Brayvo! Ancore! Some men love Italian, a good English ballad for my money.

I have been making German translations for this new paper, here are two the best I think though they have been cut out by that Jackass the Editor.

THE KING ON THE TOWER.

The cold grey hills they bind me around
The darksome vallies lie sleeping below,
But the winds as they pass o'er all yon ground
Bring me never a sound of woe.

O for all I have suffered & striven
Care has embittered my cup & my feast
But here is the night, & the dark blue heaven,
And my soul shall be at rest.

Ye golden legends writ in the skies
I turn towards you with longing soul
And list to the awful harmonies
Of the burning spheres as onward they roll.

My limbs are weary, my sight nigh gone
My sword it hangeth upon the wall.
Right have I spoken & right have I done
When shall I *rest* me once for all ?

O blessed rest ! O royal night
Wherefore seemeth the time so long
Till I see yon stars in their fullest light
And hear their loudest Song.

Uhland.

TO A VERY OLD 'OMAN.

1.

And you were once a maiden fair
A blushing virgin warm & young
With spotless brow that knew no care
And myrtles wreathed in golden hair
Upon a bridegroom's arm you hung.

2.

The golden locks are silvered now
The blushing cheek is pale & wan,
The spring may bloom the autumn glow,
All's one—in chimney corner, thou
Sitst shivering on.

3.

A moment & thou sinkst to rest,
To wake perhaps an angel blest
In the bright presence of the Lord.
O weary is life's path to all,
Hard is the strife & light the fall,
But wondrous the reward !

La Motte Fouqué.

Of this collection of hitherto unpublished Thackeray Letters and Verses twenty-five copies only have been printed by Clement Shorter for distribution among his friends. London, April 9th, 1916.

No 19
Clement Shorter

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